**Backlog in LPG Connections**

799. SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a backlog of LPG connection booking in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the details of measures taken by Government to clear the backlog and by when will this backlog be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (c) New LPG connections are made available as soon as possible and in any case, within a period of sixty days. At present, new LPG connections are available for genuine domestic customers.

Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have reported that they have released 36.80 lakh new LPG connections in the country during the period April 2008 to December 2008.

Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) has reported a waitlist of 1,31,471 for release of new LPG connections with their LPG distributorships in the country as on 01.02.2009. The waiting list for release of new connections is expected to be liquidated by the end of March, 2009.

**Revision of CMRE by ONGC**

800. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Corporate Policy Section of the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) at Dehradun has revised Conveyance Maintenance Reimbursement Expenditure (CMRE) with effect from 18 November, 2008 *vide* office order No.77/2008;

(b) whether it is also a fact that drivers subsidy amounting to Rs.6000/- per month will be paid to officers E-7 to E-9 on account of above revision;

(c) if so, the reasons for not accepting demand of contractual workers on the basis of ONGC Office Order (23/2007) dated 02 March, 2007; and

(d) the reasons for discrimination by the Management for the payment to permanent workers directly employed in the production activity of the Corporation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) considers the demands of employees as per existing Human Resources policies of ONGC. ONGC feels that the demand of contractual workers can not be equated with the permanent workers of ONGC and there is no discrimination.

**Finalization of IPI pipeline agreement**

801. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of Indo-Iran gas pipeline project;

(b) whether talks on the proposed Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) pipeline has been progressing very slowly;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether any discussion was held in this regard with the President of Iran during his recent visit to India;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether Iran is willing for a change in the delivery point of gas for IPI pipeline; and

(g) the time by which this gas pipeline agreement is likely to be finalised?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (c) India is pursuing the import of natural gas from Iran through Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) Gas Pipeline Project. Various important issues, *viz.*, pricing of gas, delivery point of gas, project structure, payment of transportation tariff and transit fees for passage of natural gas through Pakistan, etc. are under discussion amongst the participating countries.

Such multilateral projects involve protracted discussions, as all the aspects have to be carefully examined and deliberated upon to the satisfaction of the participating countries to protect each country's interests and to avoid any problems in the future in the successful operation of the project.

(d) and (e) In the meeting held between the President of Islamic Republic of Iran and Prime Minister on April 29, 2008, the modalities of pursuing the project were discussed.

(f) The issue is under discussion amongst the participating countries.

(g) Finalization of the agreement can be achieved when satisfactory resolution of the issues under discussion is reached by the countries participating in the project, *viz.*, Iran, Pakistan and India.

**Production of APM Gas by ONGC**

802. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) has reduced the production of gas to be sold under Administered Pricing Mechanism (APM);

(b) if so, the details thereof?

(c) the details of APM gas produced in the last three years; and

(d) the causes for declining and the steps taken by Government to increase the production of APM gas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (c) The details of APM gas supplied by ONGC for the last three years *i.e.* 2005-06 to 2007-08 is as under:-